

ER 7-3454

23 AUG 1

The Honorable Nelson A. Rockefeller
 Special Assistant to the President
 The White House

Dear Mr. Rockefeller:

Prior to his departure for Europe, Allen Dulles asked me to pass on to you our reaction to the memorandum which you sent to him under date of 12 August.

It is our view that whereas from an intelligence standpoint the proposal would be advantageous, there are numerous other aspects and implications which this Agency is not competent to pass upon, but which would appear to require the most thoughtful examination.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

C. P. Cabell
 Lieutenant General, USAF
 Acting Director

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(NOTE FOR RECORD: Referenced memo concerns proposal re Opening Russian Air Space to Commercial Aviation.)

*NOTE: Orig & courtesy copy
 not classified. File copies
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 of "Note for Record" below.*

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Dear Nelson:

My review of your suggestion for opening Russian air space to commercial aviation has necessarily been hasty in view of my pending departure for an overseas trip. If properly timed and if its consequences are fully examined, this idea might be a logical follow-up of the President's Geneva inspection proposal. It is certainly in line with the Secretary's view that steps should be taken to lift the Iron Curtain. From an intelligence point of view, there may well be net advantages to the United States because the types of information that could be acquired under this proposal are relatively more difficult of access in the Soviet Union as compared to this country.

Before the proposal is advanced at any meeting with the Russians, however, there are a considerable number of problems that should be carefully analyzed. Among these are:

- a. The effect of the proposal on our NATO and SEATO allies (since the proposal would open up the air space of our allies to Russian aviation, some discreet consultation with them would be appropriate before discussing the subject with the Soviets.)
- b. The impact of the proposal on the commercial air interests of the U. S. and of nations friendly to us.
- c. The effect on U. S. public opinion and the Congress.
- d. The effect on our entire early warning and air defense system.
- e. The views of the Department of Justice.
- f. The effect of the McCarran Act.

The relative sizes of the commercial air fleets of the Soviets and the Free World weights the proposal in our favor on the surface. This may be met with demands for quid pro quo that would be hard to deny without propaganda disadvantage. It may be assumed that the Russians will probably not accept the proposal -- at least not initially -- and will try to turn it to their own propaganda advantage.

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Finally, the question of timing of the proposal and sequence of steps involved is of utmost importance. If it is presented in such a manner to be linked to the President's Geneva proposal, the Russians might be able to twist this coincidence in a way to discredit both. Furthermore, such a relationship between the two proposals might suggest a degree of urgency that could be misleading to our allies and possibly used to the propaganda disadvantage of the United States.

Sincerely,

ALLEN W. DULLES
Director

Honorable Nelson A. Rockefeller
Special Assistant
The White House

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DD/P- [redacted]

18 August 1955

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